

How to lose that holiday weight



We all tend to overindulge during the holidays. If that's the case with you, you'll love the four weight loss strategies we've rounded up to help.

With the right tools and strategies for weight loss, you don't need to rely on just willpower alone.

Here are four top weight loss strategies proven to make a real difference:

1. Write it down.

One of the longest and largest weight loss maintenance studies in the United States, published in the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, found that writing down what you eat every day can double your weight loss. Writing down what we consume helps us to see the patterns in our behaviours when it comes to food, which helps us to spot our habits so that we can change them if we need to.

2. Plan ahead.

A study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* found that weight loss results are far greater when pre-made meals are used instead of conventional dieting alone. An easy tip is to make a few dinners at once and freeze them. You can also prepare your lunches and snacks the night before or for a few days at a time so that you always have a ready-made healthy meal at hand.

3. Make friends with protein.

Eating recommended daily portions of high-quality protein can help you to maintain muscle mass and reduce body fat during weight loss. It also makes you feel fuller for longer. Maintaining muscle mass is important because it helps the body burn more calories – it's one of the reasons men often lose weight quicker than women because they naturally have a higher muscle mass so their bodies burn calories faster.

4. Make sleep a priority.

According to WebMD, sleep has a powerful effect on your metabolism. Not only does sleep help regulate your hunger hormones, but lack of sleep can make you more susceptible to behaviour that can lead to weight gain. Lack of sleep can cause your brain to make bad decisions by dulling your impulse control, leading you to search for a temporary fatigue fix from a high sugar drink, or a pick me up from a sugar and calorie laden treat. Lack of sleep also increases cravings.

Weight loss doesn't need to be all hard work. Try these four proven strategies for effective and hassle-free weight loss.